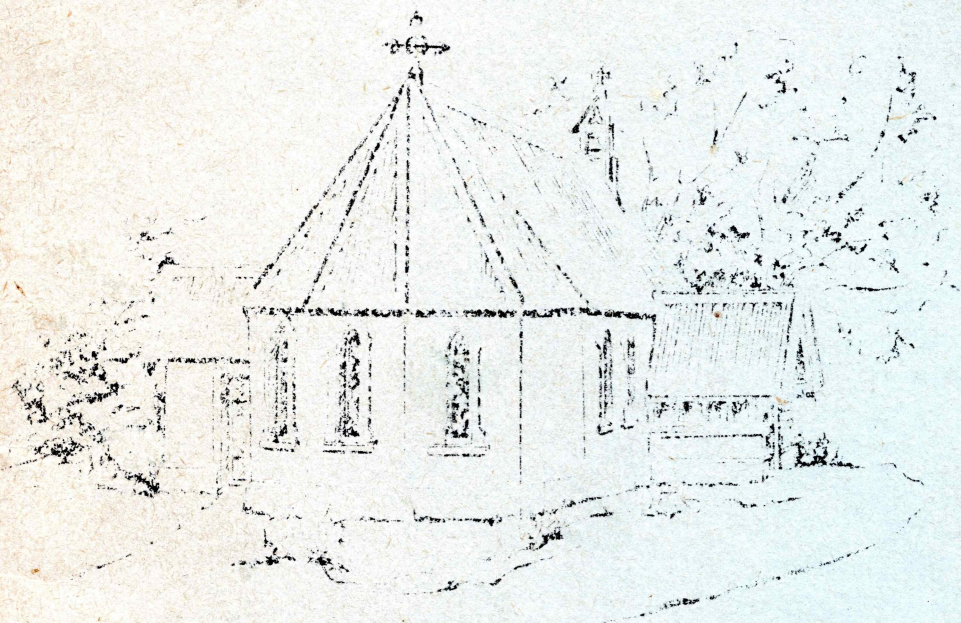


CENTENARY OF BARRHILL

1877 - 1977



ST. JOHN'S

SUNDAY, 10TH JULY, 1977

BARRHILL

Once it was a busy place,
Life moving at a rapid pace,
Small but growing,
The village showing
Great promise for the future.

The founder had a dream,
It was,
To develop in this country,
A village of his own country.
It would have children, fathers, and mothers,
A church, school, and all the others;
And after a while
His dream came true.

However,
It didn't last forever,
A route for a railway line was changed,
Mainly because of that,
And a few other things,
The dream began to fall apart,
With all the people beginning to depart,
The village gradually became almost deserted.

Today, bearing the original name,
The village is basically the same,
There still is church,
Bringing for a brief moment
More people to the village,
Which is inhabited for the rest of the time
By the sheep, the birds, and a few people,
The place is **Barrhill**.

P. E. Irwin.



**Bishop Pyatt being greeted by the Vicar, Archdeacon
R. O. Williams, at the St. Mark's Rakaia Centennial,
on 8th May, 1977**

18 May, 1977

Church House
84 Gloucester Street
Christchurch, N.Z.

Dear Everyone,

Congratulations to Barrhill—church and people—on the Centenary. From the beginning it was an exciting project, which, although never carried out as intended, has left its own mark on the County.

May St. John's, Barrhill, continue to make its mark on the lives and characters of those who grow up under its influence.

God bless you all

ALLAN
Bishop of Christchurch

VICAR'S FOREWORD

I commend this little booklet as it appears at the centennial of St. John's Church, Barrhill.

It is necessary that a church like St. John's should have such a booklet available to the public. I think of the Cathedral in Christchurch, St. James' Church at the Franz Josef Glacier, the Church of the Good Shepherd at Lake Tekapo, St. Mary's Church, Timaru, and the Church of the Holy Trinity at Lyttelton, which draw many visitors both for worship and for a quiet inspection.

The Visitors' Books at Barrhill indicate an interest which people from far and near have in this very English little building, set in trees so reminiscent of an English countryside. They like to find shade from the sun as they meal beneath the trees, and few there be who having come thus far do not fail to find moments of peace and inspiration within the portals of the church, whose atmosphere shows all the signs of use and loving care.

I would love to feel that all who come into St. John's might pray that all who worship at Barrhill be knit more and more into the kind of loving fellowship which looks out, and goes out into God's world with the spirit of the Lord in their hearts, and may we who worship here pray that the visitor returns safely on his journey, and to his home, conscious always of the presence of the living Lord.

REG WILLIAMS,

The Vicarage,

29 Rolleston Street,

Rakaia.

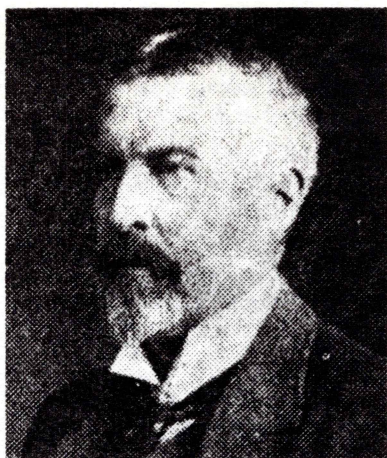
CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I would like to thank the Centennial Committee for arranging these celebrations and trust that everyone attending has an enjoyable time.

The history of St. John's Barrhill Church, School and village is compiled from information forwarded from present and past parishioners and from much research of original records by Dorothy Irwin and others and edited by Catharine Mackenzie. I regret any errors or omissions and hope that this booklet, a brief record of the past 100 years, will be interesting and informative for future generations.

In conclusion, I wish you one and all the best for the future and pray that the years ahead will allow Barrhill Church to progress as a place of worship that will inspire the future generations to even greater things.

JOHN IRWIN



JOHN CATHCART WASON

BARRHILL

"Barrhill began as a vision; it is now mostly a dream."

(Extract from *The Fisherman*, 1951)

The Barrhill Vision was saved from becoming a dream by its spiritual focus—the small Anglican church of St. John the Evangelist.

Built in 1877 at the centre of a thriving village, the little concrete and wooden Church has held together a changing Barrhill community for 100 years.

It continues to do so into its second century as the focal point of a larger, but no less active district.

The Barrhill Vision began when a massive Scot, John Cathcart Wason, said to be six foot six inches tall arrived on the banks of the Rakaia river to take up the goodwill of the run Lendon, 20,000 acres of tussockland which he renamed Corwar his Ayrshire home.

John Wason's father had successfully turned moorland into arable land, and with ample capital behind him, Wason proceeded to do the same with tussock.

Wason made between 5,000 and 6,000 acres of his run freehold and with other purchases, some land being bought by other settlers, the whole of Corwar was purchased by 1878.

He had a passion for trees and was one of the outstanding Canterbury farmers of the 1870s and 1880s in this respect. Corwar's plantations were visible for miles across the Rakaia as early as 1885.

About this time the Government had a scheme for free grants of land equivalent to two acres for every one acre planted in trees. Wason soon qualified for his maximum grant of 250 acres, with large shelter belts south of the Rakaia.

He built in a manner reminiscent of a Scottish estate or English squire—a theme he was to take up again later.

His homestead was a 20 room single storeyed mansion set up on the top of a high cliff above the Rakaia River, from where all water had to be carried.

Around the house he planted pines, oaks, walnuts, old-fashioned apple trees and rare trees from all over the world.

Wason housed and looked after his farm workers well. The farm outbuildings were up to date, while large stables held horses, a carriage and four-in-hand for special occasions. A lodge and gate-keeper completed the mirror of a British estate.

However, his sights were set further than Corwar. He had brought from Scotland the belief that farmworkers should own their own homes and he envisaged a village community based on Corwar, with himself as "squire".

His chance came in the land boom of 1877 and 1878. Farming immigrants were pouring into Canterbury, but there was a severe shortage of rural accommodation.

Many settlement schemes were planned, but few had the vision and determination given to Barrhill by John Wason.

He named the future village after a place near his home in Scotland, and proceeded to set it up with its church, school, shops, factory and workers' houses.

The site was well surveyed and planted—an avenue of birches on the east and one of oaks on the west. In the centre, was the market square, planted around with elms and oaks.

Wason planned the village and put it into effect, but the 17 acres, one rood and 20 perches were made available to the commissioners of the Waste Lands Board by Charles Mackie of Lavington and his daughter Anne Baird, on August 22, 1876.

The immigration officer was pressing the Roads Boards to provide houses for new arrivals, but the fact that Wason made Barrhill a solo effort seems to stem from the fact he ran foul of his fellow members, on the South Rakaia Board—E. S. Coster of Corwar, C. S. Mackie and H. Lavington and D. J. Holmes.

Matters came to a head in 1877 when Wason objected to a move by E. S. Coster to transfer the funds of the South Rakaia Road Board to the Bank of New Zealand from the Bank of Australia, not because of complaints, but to give the other bank a "turn".

Wason condemned this as "an outrage of decency and the ordinary methods of transacting business," saying that Mr Coster was subordinating public welfare to personal feelings and brotherly love.

Coster challenged Wason to an election on June 26, 1877, and the local ratepayers seemed to favour personal feelings in doing business. Wason was not re-elected and a number of ratepayers "cheered lustily at the result".

However, Wason's forthright and dynamic nature was to stand him in good stead in the establishment of Barrhill, earning him the goodwill and affection of its villagers.

The plan for Barrhill was drawn up by Charles F. Barker, and is dated March 24, 1877. Twenty-eight sections were marked out for sale around the central Market Square, crossed by two tree-lined avenues.

Four large sections bordering the square were reserved—two for the Church and Vicarage and two for the School.

The Board of Education was the first purchaser to take up land—two acres for the price of 10 shillings, on July 23, 1877.

The first sale of a house section registered was, predictably, the site for an hotel, bought for £400 on December 5, 1877. Barrhill would have its bar, if it never had a hill!!

Other sales went through, until Barrhill was housing a population of over 50, including the families of a baker, blacksmith, saddler, bricklayer, farm workers, Post Office keeper, shepherd and gardener.

In the absence of records, it appears Wason provided much finance for the houses, School and Church. He certainly worked energetically on fund raising activities for his projects.

He was a member of the Ashburton County Council, and instrumental in the foundation of the Ashburton Hospital.

It has always been known that the Church of St. John the Evangelist was planned by Wason as the spiritual focus of the village, but it was not until 1975 that the extent of this planning was noticed.

An aerial photograph taken by Bill Irwin, showed the Barrhill trees as forming a pattern of three circles, suggesting the symbol of the Trinity with the Church as the focal point.



THE FIRST CORWAR HOMESTEAD, APPROXIMATELY 1875

Until the Church was built, services were held in the Corwar woolshed, taken by the Vicar of Ashburton, the Reverend W. E. Paige and the Lay-reader, Mr. C. Mackie of Lavington.

The building of the Church started in 1876 and finished in early July of the next year. The first service was held on July 8, 1877, conducted by Mr. Paige—and marked by the ringing of the first Church Bell heard in Mid-Canterbury.

From 1877 to 1885 Barrhill flourished. Wason built a boiling down works for mutton, which passed up to 100 sheep a day through its door, until the frozen meat industry forced its closure.

Wason's relationship with his villagers is not clear. Some tales have him living out the image of the benevolent squire concerned with the welfare of his workers and neighbours, but the satisfaction with which the South Rakaia ratepayers greeted his dismissal from the Roads Board does not bear out this sort of picture.

However, most stories agree that he took great interest in the religious activities of his villagers, as well as in their other activities. It is recorded that he would come into the Church at the beginning of a service and look around the congregation. Noticing someone was absent, he would say, "H'm, Brown's not here. Mrs. Brown, where's your husband?"

Many of the older folk of Ashburton remember picnics and excursions to Corwar, some on wagons drawn by traction engines, and visitors from far afield enjoyed the hospitality of the "Squire".

However, as early as 1886, villagers were leaving Barrhill, as the effects of depression, the gradual sale of the Corwar estates and the by-passing of the village by the Methven-Rakaia railway took their toll of business.

Wason had hoped the railway would run up Alford Forest road, with Barrhill prospering as a result. Lauriston, however, was to gain this, leaving Barrhill eight miles from the main route.

One story has it that he took horses and a plough and ran furrows through the area surveyed for the railway.

This tale sounds true compared with another which has him upending someone in a bowl of trifle after a disagreement at a Christchurch ball.

It is not recorded why Wason packed his bags, sold what remained of Corwar to Peter Drummond, and returned to the United Kingdom in 1900. However, the picture is built up of his disillusionment with building an ideal in a new country. The vision had been established, but was now being eroded.

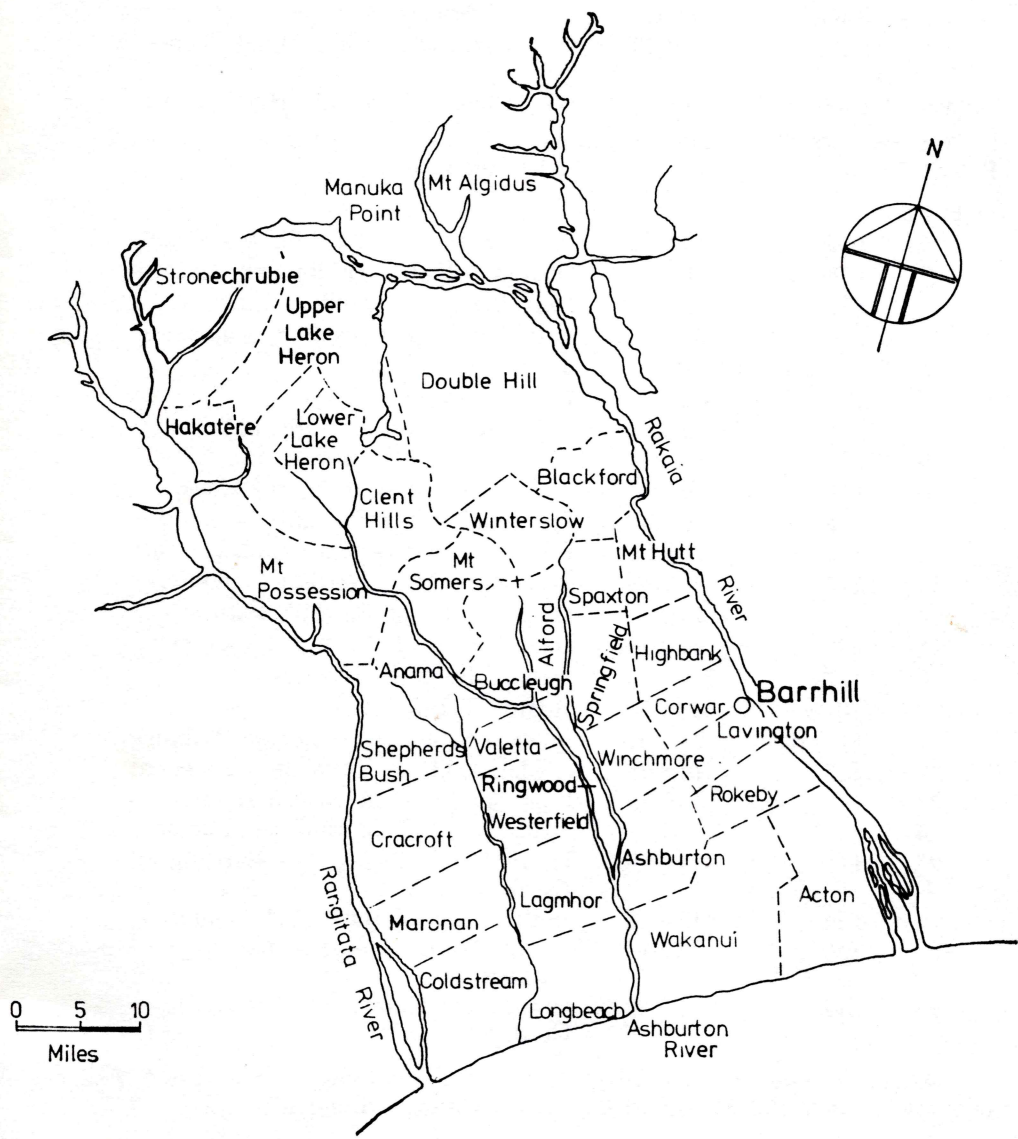
Once home, he was elected Member of Parliament for the Orkney Island and Shetland Islands as a Unionist. However, in 1902, he had handed his resignation into his party over a disagreement, and stood again as a Liberal.

It says something for the personality of the man that his constituents elected him again, and till his death in 1921, as a Liberal.

Mr. J. C. Irwin, when visiting England in 1908, met Mr. Wason, and found him still interested in Corwar and the trees at Barrhill.

The land gradually reverted to farmland, the few houses remained, but the Church continued to prosper, cared for by an active and conscientious group of volunteers.

—Catherine Mackenzie



Early Pastoral Runs

**TABLE SHOWING LAND PURCHASES FROM WASON—D.P. 144—
BARRHILL SITUATED IN BLOCK V CORWAR SURVEY DISTRICT**

Lot No.	Price	Date	Name of Purchaser
1	£400 (Inc. House)	5.11.77	Geo Rimer of Barrhill, Hotel Keeper
Transfer'd	£500	3.8.78	Wm. Hagan of Barrhill, Hotel Keeper
Repurchased by Wason after a mortgagees sale on 5.10.1882 and sold with Pt Lot 2 to Harry Mills a farmer for £90 on 12.10.1894.			
Pt 2 &			
6	£100	13.8.78	Auguste Joen of Barrhill, Blacksmith
3	£28	6.2.78	George Allington of Barrhill, Carpenter
4	£70	22.3.95	John Brick of Barrhill, Farmer
5	£20	30.5.01	J. R. Bland of Ashburton, Auctioneer
6	See Pt 2 above	30.5.01	Joen, Blacksmith
7	10/-	21.1.78	Church Property Trustees
8	£75	5.4.93	James Bishop of Barrhill, Baker
9	£50	10.3.79	Thos. Mutter of Barrhill, Saddler
10	£19	14.8.78	Thos. Betts of Barrhill, Bricklayer
11	£15	9.7.82	Wm. Radford of Barrhill, Labourer
12	£16	10.6.84	Edward Saunders of Barrhill, Labourer
13	£125	31.7.78	Wm. Radford of Barrhill, Labourer
14	£20	14.8.78	Daniel Hurst of Barrhill, Farmer
15	£25	14.8.78	John Martin of Barrhill, Labourer
16	10/-	7.4.1916	Church Property Trustees
17/20	10/-	23.7.77	Board of Education
21	£12/10/-*	21.5.01	Edward Saunders of Barrhill, Labourer
22	£25	14.8.78	Frederick Cook of Barrhill, Shepherd
23	£75*	12.10.96	John Spring of Barrhill, Labourer
24	£5	3.6.01	John Spring of Barrhill, Contractor
25	£25	14.8.78	Harry Longville Snow of Barrhill, Farmer
26	£75	13.8.78	James Lobb of Barrhill, Labourer
27	£50	22.3.95	George Brimmicumbe of Barrhill, Farmer
28	£12	9.6.82	Christopher Hammond of Barrhill, Gardener

After 1901 Wason is described as "formerly of Corwar Canterbury N.Z. but now of Belgrave Mansions, Grosvenor Gardens, London".

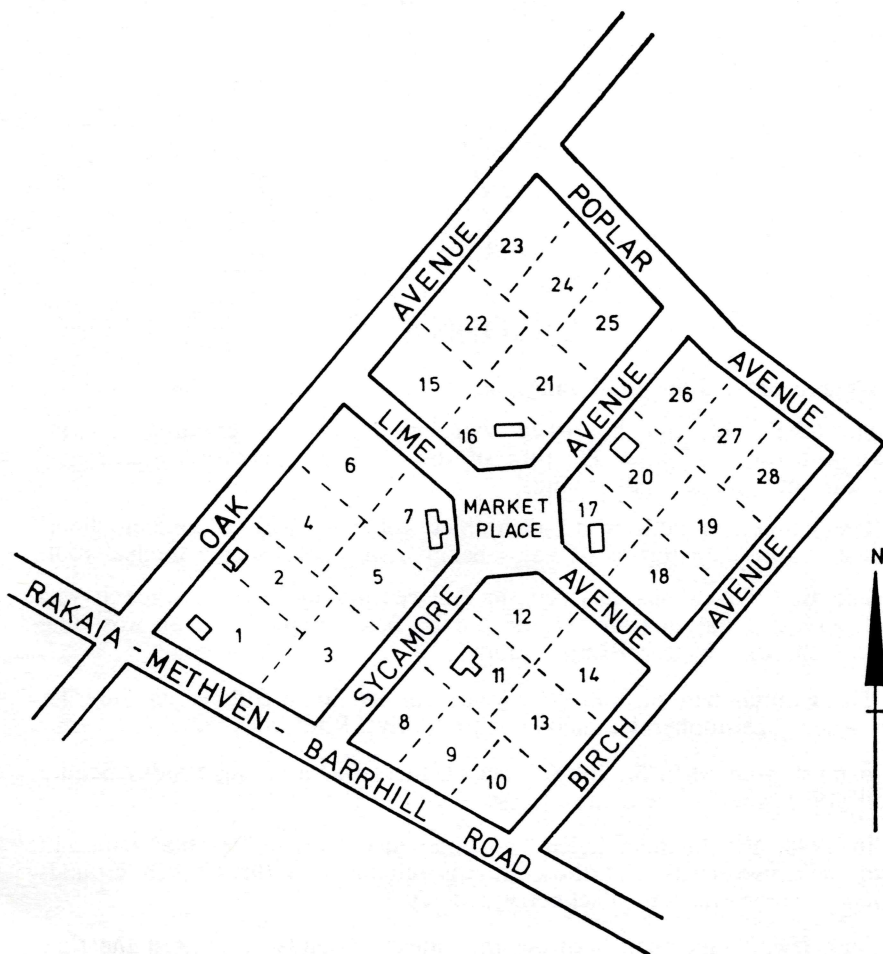
* Indicates that other land was included with the purchase.

Further Reading:

"History of Ashburton" John Brown (1940).

"History of Canterbury Volume 3 1876-1950" Dr. W. H. Scotter.

"The Early Canterbury Runs" Acland.



BARRHILL



ST JOHN'S

The Church of St. John the Evangelist

St. John's, Barrhill flourished with an active and enthusiastic congregation before and after the turn of the century. Successive generations cared for the Church and grounds.

The Church is built of 12 inch thick concrete, with a concrete floor. Its most beautiful feature is its kauri beams rising to a steeply pitched roof.

The Bell Tower has survived the full century until 1977, when it was rebuilt with a donation from Arthur and Barbara Dixon. The bell was rung for over 20 years by the Bishop family.

The Church had to wait four years for its first wedding, on July 19, 1881, when Christopher Hammond married Eva Radford.

Almost from when St. John's opened, there was a strong Sunday School—until 1974 when it went into recess.

In 1928, Vic Leaman felled two large macrocarpa trees that had outgrown their usefulness, and those stumps remained in the Church grounds for years overgrown with blackberry and ivy.

Jack Irwin remembers mowing the church grounds in 1930 at the time when he was living at "Fairfield" Rokeby, five miles away. He would pack his lunch and a beer bottle of tea, place them in an old woollen sock, and yoke his two draught horses into the mower. He did this periodically, once hitting one of those stumps and overturning the mower. Arthur Stephens arranged for a bulldozer to remove the stumps in 1940. Arthur was the first parishioner to mow the Church grounds with a tractor drawn mower and punctured his tractor tyre for the effort.

Mr. O. E. Hooper lent the Vestrymen his flame thrower in 1950 to burn off black berry and broom,

Prior to the 75th anniversary in 1952, Canon Parr raised £100 after a service (in the Church) towards the new red carpet for the sanctuary and centre aisle. He bid or spurred the congregation on by saying "Who'll give a lamb? Two lambs!" and so on!

In 1948 we held our first Anglican Church Ball at Lauriston. It was classed as "the" local ball of the year with everyone wearing full dress—gloves, bow-ties, the lot! Another special ball was held in 1952 for the 75th Jubilee with Canon and Mrs Parr leading off the Grand March. Mr. H. Stevens, the People's Warden at St. John's and storekeeper at Lauriston did his utmost to make those balls successful both enjoyably and financially. The home-made suppers were sumptuous, supplied by the women of the Parish and made of trays of decorated cream cakes, pork bones and other goodies. Cook's Orchestra usually supplied the music. The profit for the ball in 1954 was £43-16-10 but the last ball was held in 1958. Maybe because Harry and Ina had left the district or because times were changing!

A two toned carpet was laid on the concrete floor in 1972. This covered the nave of the Church, adding warmth and doing away with the coconut matting that had been down (between pews) since 1890. It was made possible by the accumulated interest on monies bequeathed to St. John's over 30 years ago by the late Olive Richards and the late William Irwin. The grounds of St. John's were greatly improved by the formation of the landscaped rock garden in 1968.



SNAP TAKEN IN 1932 AT A WORKING BEE AT ST. JOHN'S

Messrs. Chas. Goodwin, A. T. Maidens, Vic Leaman, J. C. Irwin, H. T. Crothers



ST. JOHN'S 75th JUBILEE COMMITTEE, 1952

Messrs. Arthur Stephens (Secretary), Frank Clemens (Treasurer), Arthur Dixon, Vernie Boag, John Irwin (Chairman), Harry Stevens
Miss L. Boag, Mesdames L. Reesby, Maude Boag, Bessie Dixon

REPORT OF THE 75th JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS HELD IN OCTOBER 1952

Today the village looks rather forlorn except for one spot—the church of St. John which still holds its rightful place of glory in the community. On the theme of these remarks the Dean of Christchurch (later becoming Dean of St. Paul's, London) the Very Rev. M. Sullivan based his sermon at the jubilee service "Show some token upon me for good" was the subject of his address.

The service which was attended by 120 people from various parts of the county was conducted by the Vicar Canon S. Parr assisted by Canon A. C. Purchas and the Rev. W. Wisdom.

A duet, "Brother James' Air", was sung by Mesdames W. Crozier and J. Irwin during the service.

Afternoon tea was served in the church grounds and a jubilee cake made by Mrs. L. Reesby and iced by Mrs. H. T. Crothers was cut by Mrs. Parr and Mrs. T. Watts.

GIFTS TO ST JOHN'S

1897 Mrs A. McIlraith, Balrazie gave two hand painted coloured windows which were placed each side of the altar for 70 years until they were replaced by stained glass windows. She also gave Altar cloths and a collection bag.

The Rev. J. Holland carved and donated the oak Font.

Mrs J. Holland painted and donated two paintings "Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane" and "His Ascension into Heaven". These two beautiful water colours are still hanging in St. John's.

1901 The congregation gave two brass vases.

1930 Mr. and Mrs. Fairey donated a silver baptismal shell in memory of their eleven year old daughter, Ruth.

1944 The electric light and heating was donated by Mr. A. T. Maidens.

1947 Mr. and Mrs J. C. Irwin donated "The Good Shepherd" the middle and first stained glass window in memory of their son, William Francis, R.N.Z.A.F., who died of injuries in England in 1942 during World War II.

At the same time an Altar Cross was given by St. John's congregation in memory of W. F. Irwin, and on Bill's grave in Whythall, England, a tablet was placed in the centre of the surrounding stonework with the inscription "From the parishioners of St. John's Church, Barrhill, New Zealand."

1948 Mr. R. Maidens gave a round organ stool.

1952 Two trees were planted, one by Mrs. F. McCoy and the other by Mr. J. C. Irwin. A plaque was placed in the porch and dedicated to commemorate the 75th anniversary.



1960 Canon and Mrs. Parr donated two silver candle sticks.

Two more stained glass windows were given—"The Sower" by Mrs. Bessie Dixon, in memory of her husband Henry Walter Dixon and "St. Francis" by the Maidens family in memory of their parents, Louise Edith and Arthur Thomas Maidens. These two windows were chosen and bought in England by Mrs. Bessie Dixon.

Miss E. Richards embroidered and donated Altar linen.

1962 To commemorate the 85th Anniversary, a plaque was given by the congregation of St. John's which reads "To the glory of God and in grateful remembrance of John Cathcart Wason, of Corwar, and others who built and furnished this Church of St. John the Evangelist in 1877 as the spiritual centre of the village of Barrhill." Their vision was to establish here a small portion of the old country they had known and loved. "Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord."

A Lectern, featuring an Eagle, the symbol of St. John, was paid for from a bequest to St. John's from Mr. A. T. Maidens. This oak Lectern was carved by Mr. J. C. Vivian, Christchurch.

1963 Mr. H. G. Patterson made and donated some long wooden kneelers, the Church notice board and the Mission Box.

Mr. A. Stephens gave the plate on the Church gate.

1966 Dorothy and John Irwin donated an electronic organ.

Ann and Alan Dickie donated an organ stool.

1971 Mr. R. G. Mauger donated the fourth stained glass window "On the Road to Emmaus", in memory of his grandparents, Elizabeth and George Blackmore, and all pioneers.

1973 Mrs. D. Byrne, donated a bible, Jennifer and David McLaughlin gave a candle snuffer and an anonymous donor gave a veil and burse set.

1976 Mrs. Lorna Clemens donated a Vicar's Chair in memory of her husband, Francis John Clemens. Frank was a stalwart Church goer and Treasurer of St. John's for 30 years.

BARRHILL

My family, friends and home
Is what it means to me,
And what one thinks of
In this centenary.

How things have changed in all these years,
Through people's hopes, ideas and fears,
The houses have fallen, the train has gone,
The School and Church both stand alone.

Barrhill has a special atmosphere,
Always found from year to year,
There's something about the Church and Square,
Which you always feel when ever you're there.
Barrhill—I hope will remain the same,
May Barrhill and its people live up to their name.

—Prue Dixon



SISTER NOELINE MAUDE

Photo — W. R. Irwin

Sister Noeline Maude has become one of Barrhill's most distinguished former residents, through her religious nursing calling.

The daughter of Mrs. Maude Boag and the late Mr. V. W. Boag formerly of Lauriston, she was baptised at St. John's, Barrhill in 1933 and confirmed at St. Mark's, Rakaia in 1949. In 1950-52 she was Sunday School Superintendent and organist at Barrhill until starting a nursing career.

In 1960 Sister Noeline began Church Army training in Auckland until called to the religious life. In 1962 she joined the Community of the Sacred Name and on March 25, 1965 was professed as a Sister in Suva Cathedral.

In 1967 the Community established a Branch House in Fiji and Sister Noeline was one of the three Sisters who began the work there.

As a registered nurse she was responsible for the health of the children in St. Christopher's Home, and especially with the babies.

Sister Noeline returned to the Community in Christchurch in 1971 and later that year became Novice Mistress responsible for the training of those wishing to test their vocation.

THE 1945 REPORT OF ST. JOHN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Up till Christmas we had 35 children on the roll and commenced after the holidays with 30. For the past year we had an average attendance of 25.

On Whitsunday we were favoured with a visit from Deaconess Henri Park who gave us a most interesting talk, appreciated by children and teachers alike.

The children all worked very well throughout the year. Five of the senior pupils sat an examination, all passed, two with honours. We were all interested in the exhibition of the Sunday School work of the Diocese held in Christchurch last October and we entered five posters and five essays, gaining two firsts, second and third places with an essay which brought us to third place in the exhibition.

During Advent the children were busy practising a Nativity Play "Lady Catechism" which they presented at our annual prize giving, also at St. Mark's Rakaia the following Sunday. At the conclusion of the play the small children representing children of many lands brought their gifts to present to the Babe in the Manger. These gifts were later forwarded to the Polish children's camp at Pahiatua.

We had an egg drive the day of the flower service which resulted in sixteen dozen eggs—these were forwarded to the Maori Girls College.

The children again donated part of their prize fund towards a gift for our local soldiers overseas. We sent each two handkerchiefs.

Our annual picnic was brought to a sudden end by the weather, nevertheless all enjoyed themselves. During the year I received a very appreciative letter from the Lauriston Presbyterian Church which I feel showed a wonderful spirit of unity.

Misses Joyce and Gertrude Clemens are both doing splendid work with the Sunday School and I feel I cannot find words to express my thanks for their valuable help so willingly given, also to Betty Hurst who this year is taking charge of our Kindergarten class.

I must thank Dorothy Clemens who so kindly came to our help at a day's notice and played the part of Angel Gabriel in the play. I also sincerely thank the Vestry for their financial support, the Rev. Holden, and all parents and parishioners for their help in every way.

The first Sunday in each month we set aside the collection for Missions and this year collected 25/-. The children's Lenten offering amounted to £2-13-8d.

DOROTHY HALL

Superintendent

12/4/45

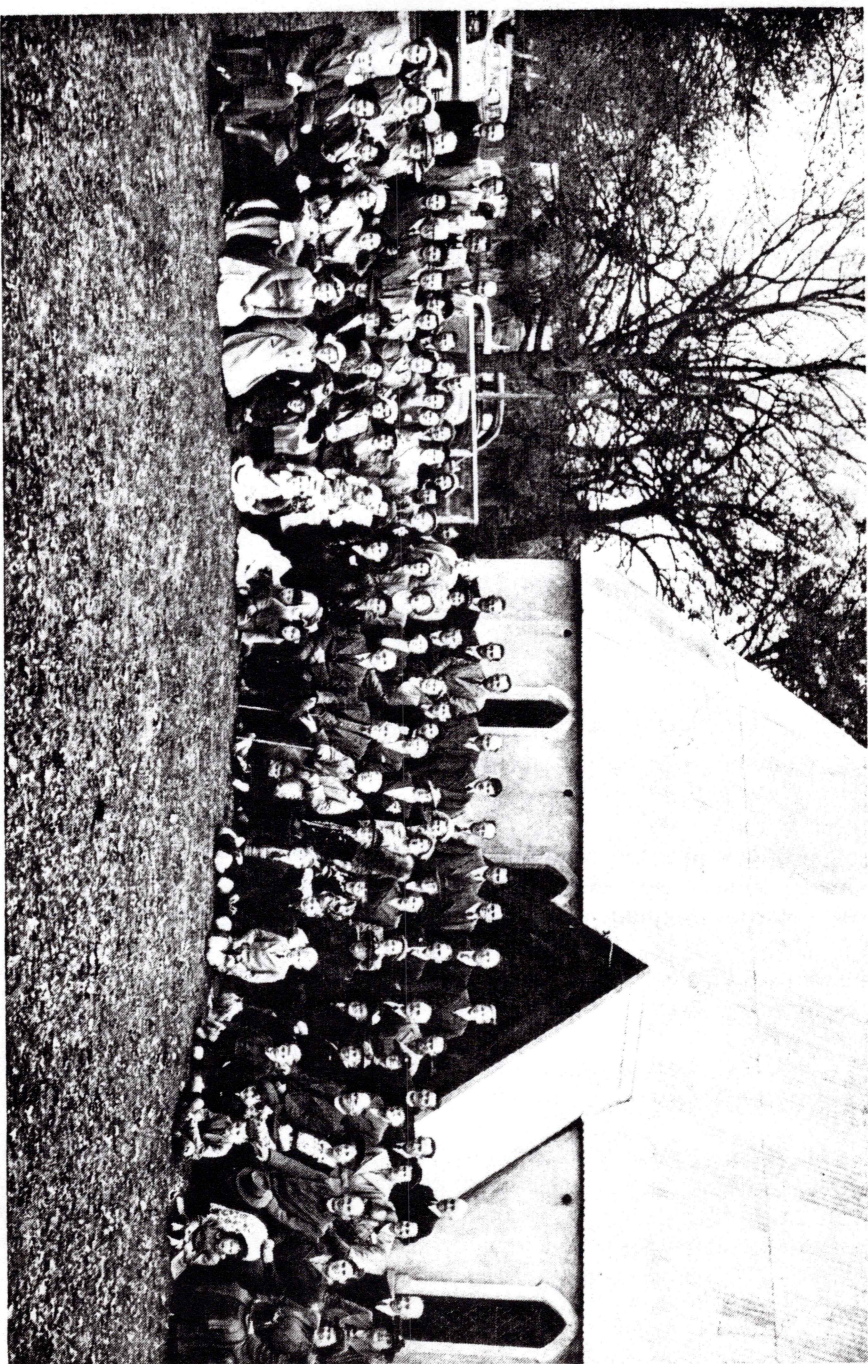
ANNUAL REPORT 1946 OF ST JOHNS

Thanksgiving services were held in St. John's Church when the long-looked for Peace was declared on VE and VJ days in May and August. The Church was full each time.

At Harvest Thanksgiving Service held in March it was agreed that instead of produce being given for the orphanages that year, parishioners should be asked to bring tinned food for Britain. £20 worth of goods was collected and each member was allotted two parcels each to pack.

Part of a thank you letter—

"Just that little extra which makes all the difference between bare rations and "a treat". Many thanks again, to you all for your kindness".



ST. JOHN'S 75th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS GROUP, OCTOBER, 1952

SIDESMEN AND HELPERS

In a glass fronted case mounted inside the Church porch is a neatly typed roster of duties. There are two lists. One contains the names of twelve men, each of whom is responsible for one month as Sidesman to assist the Vicar. The other list contains the names of twelve women, each of whom is responsible for one month for cleaning and decorating the Church.

For the festivals of Easter, Christmas and Harvest Thanksgiving extra help and flowers are requested. And so it has been for eighteen years.

Some names have changed as families have moved away or someone new has stepped in after the death of a helper but many remain the same.

Before the roster system was started, just a handful of people was responsible for these duties, John and Dorothy Irwin, Mrs. Henry Dixon, who was unable to drive herself, but whose husband was always ready to transport her, the Richards and Maidens.

It was on Mrs. Dixon's initiative that the old coconut matting was replaced with red carpet and the Church interior re-decorated and generally beautified.

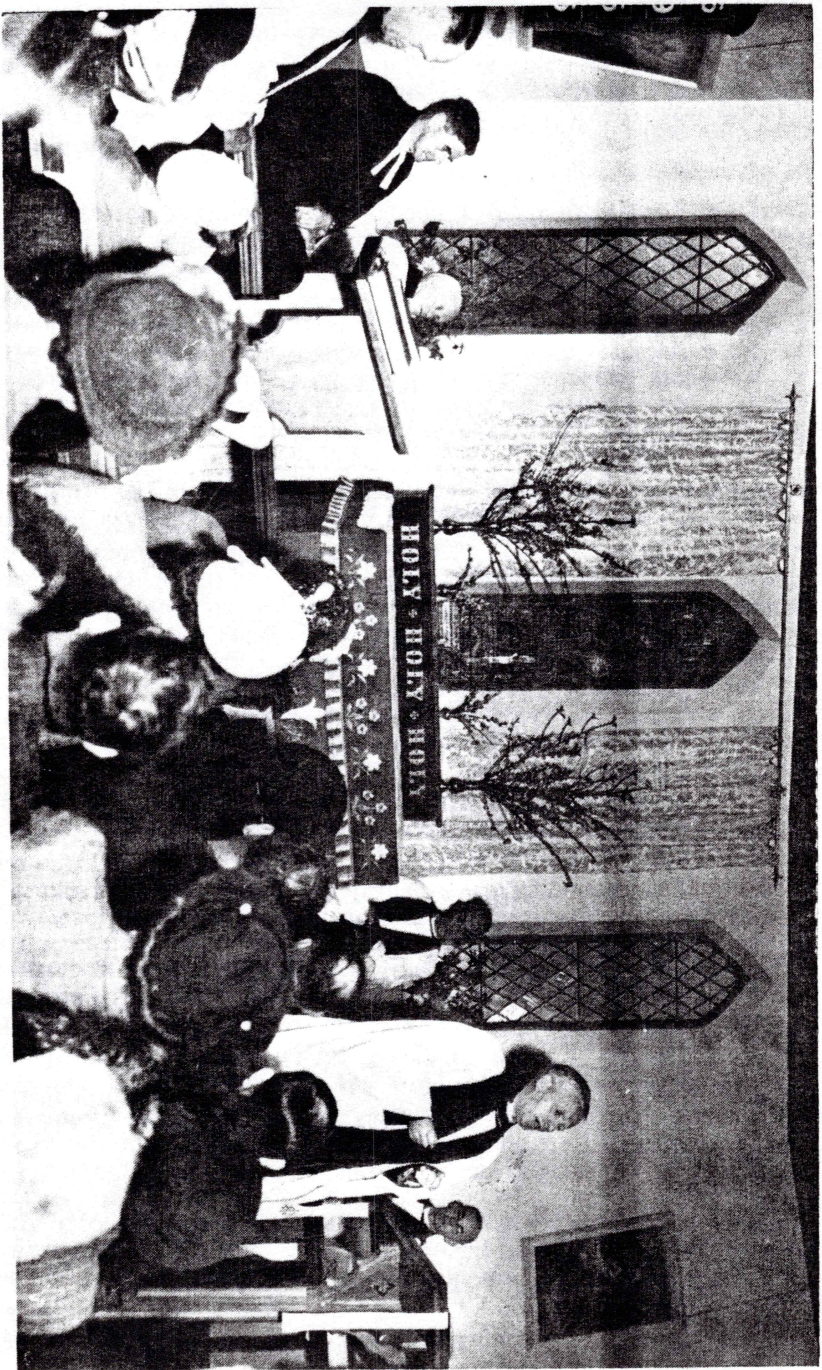
At each service someone tolls the bell—someone who is running a little ahead of time. And occasionally after a service an erratic clanging can be heard as a child tries his or her hand at bell ringing.

Someone mows the lawns—whoever notices the need. He loads up the lawn-mower and probably tidies the garden at the same time. Since Jack and Dorothy Irwin became resident in the village in 1973 they have kept a watchful eye on the state of the Church grounds. They are also chiefly responsible for the well preserved look of the old school, school house and library. Jack has spent much of his "semi-retirement" spare time with paint brush and ladder quietly restoring these old buildings.

As men and women help during their month and the children help mother to dust the pews or play the organ while flowers are being arranged, a sensitive soul can sense the peace and serenity of the hundred years of worship and love for this hallowed place.

The old Ancient and Modern hymns are sharing place with today's "Songs of Praise". The word Renewal is being heard. Looking above the windows behind the Altar are the words which have been there for a hundred years, it is as evident now as it was then, Jesus Lives, Alleluia.

—Margaret Irwin



DEAN SULLIVAN PREACHING IN ST. JOHN'S, AT THE 75th ANNIVERSARY, 1952

Other Clergy : Canon S. Parr. Rev. Read (Presbyterian), Mr. E. C. Bathurst, Canon Purchas and Canon W. Wisdom.

THE BARRHILL FAMILY FELLOWSHIP

The Fellowship evolved from the foundation of an evening group of Mothers Union on July 4, 1962.

The first meeting was held in the home of Mrs. R. M. Irwin. Ten ladies agreed with the Vicar's wife, Mrs. Rae Mountfort, that there was a need for a group for mutual help in spiritual life and discussion of common problems.

It is interesting to note that in the second meeting the talk of Mrs. Woods, the Diocesan President could be applicable today—"Making a house a home; comfort, orderliness, familiar things, openness, religion, togetherness".

By March, 1963 the worth of the group had been established and the first annual meeting was held at the Vicarage.

After Mrs. Mountfort's departure Mrs. Reesby became enrolling member and continued for seven years quietly and ably coping with what she called "this scattered group". She gathered in wives of members of the Winchmore Irrigation Research station staff and other members from the surrounding area. Mrs. A. Taylor was Secretary from 1963-66. Membership and activity increased and members joined with Rakaja's Afternoon Mothers' Union in combined meetings in Ashburton.

In 1966 19 women attended meetings with an average attendance of 11. The Secretary and Treasurer were allocated 5/- each for petty cash.

In 1969 the minutes record concern for the number of people shifting to other areas and question the advisability of continuing the group. However Mrs. Dickie and Mr. Robinson spoke against going into recess and this proved to be sound advice. It was in this year that changes in organisation took place within the Mothers' Union and The Association of Anglican Women, as we know it today, came into being. Its aims: 1. To unite in prayer and participation in the Mission of the Church; 2. To promote and safeguard Christian family life. The evening branch of the Rakaja Mothers' Union became the Barrhill Family Fellowship.

The warm feeling of fellowship in this group has not been confined to Anglicans only. Rewarding contributions have been made by members of other faiths.

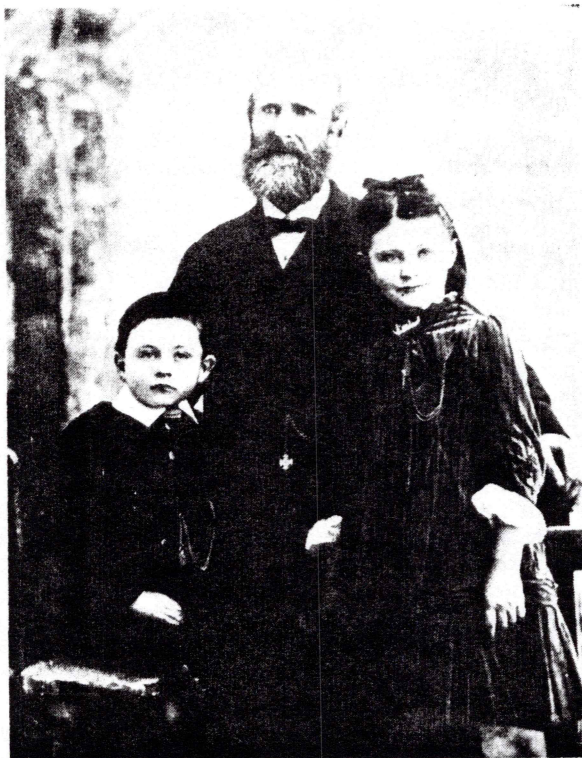
All through the records are references to advice, help with services and hospitality in the Vicarage from the Vicars and their wives, to contributions to St. Christophers, the City Mission, Melanesia, missions and staffs in combination with Rakaja. The 1970's have shown much the same activities. Caring concern is still evident and a desire to cope with the increasing problems of today.

At this period of Centennial Celebrations in our Parish, much "ground work" has been achieved by the many efforts of A.A.W. members and others. Hopefully the Fellowship will remain a viable spirit for many years to come.

Members 1962-1977

Mesdames Mountfort, Shannon, Reesby, R. M. Irwin, D. McLauchlin, Harris, F. Clemens, Dickie, Taylor, McIntyre, Curd, Knight, Bundett, M. Shaw, M. Scott, M. Wright, W. Wright, F. Jackson, Prestage, Ford, B. Eaton, M. Aires, L. Weir, G. J. Scott, R. Scott, A. Dixon, J. Ingold.

—Barbara Dixon



Two long serving Churchwardens, John Irwin and his son, John C. Irwin. Also Bessie Irwin, who was an early organist.

Photo taken approximately 1893, reproduced in 1977, by W. R. Irwin.

CHURCHWARDENS AT ST JOHN'S

The list of Churchwardens includes three generations of IRWIN—John, John C., John and R. M., in almost continuous service since 1877. Other wardens have been :

Messrs. C. J. Allington, D. Hurst, J. Spooner, A. D. Lowe, J. Hurst, W. Hurst, S. Church, E. Collison, J. Bishop, A. V. Richards, P. L. Clinton, W. Gimson, J. H. Stevens, V. W. Boag, D. McLaughlin, A. J. Dixon and F. Jackson.

THE KNEELERS PROJECT — ST JOHN'S BARRHILL

On July 1, 1971, a meeting was convened by Mrs. A. J. Dixon to discuss the making of tapestry kneelers for St. John's Church. The need for kneelers had been recorded in committee minutes twenty years previously.

The six people present unanimously decided to proceed with making kneelers and to aim to have the project completed by July, 1977. Mrs. A. J. Dixon was elected chairman of the Kneeler Committee, Mrs. R. M. Irwin secretary/treasurer with committee members Mesdames D. McLaughlan, S. F. Jackson, J. Irwin and P. W. Boag.

A letter was written to Mrs. J. Walmsley of Wellington, who was responsible for organising the kneeler project at Wellington Cathedral, asking for advice on suitable materials. Mrs. Walmsley was very helpful and her advice was followed.

Two members of the Ashburton Needle-women's Guild spoke to all interested about tapestry work, thus stimulating interest and giving ideas.

Mrs. Elizabeth Tipping of Christchurch suggested that the design and colour scheme for the tops of the kneelers should be left to the choice of of the needle woman, but that all sides should be red to match the red carpeting in the Church. In this way Mrs. Tipping felt we would achieve unity without uniformity.

Mr. Patterson from Ashburton kindly made tapestry frames which could be bought at a reasonable price.

To finance the project Mr. R. M. Irwin made a loan of \$100. This was used for buying canvas, a bulk supply of the red wool for the sides, foam rubber pads, and red hessian for backing. The cost of a kneeler was as follows—canvas 75c, red wool \$1.40, foam pad 75c, hessian 18c—a total of \$3.08. Added to this was the cost of wool for the top, bringing the total cost of one kneeler to approximately \$5. Later, with the price of wool rising from 14c a skein to 35c a skein the cost was higher.

Many of the needle-women paid for the materials they used. Others who felt unable to make a kneeler themselves donated \$5 towards the cost of materials. One family donated \$25, one kneeler for each member of the family. At the time of writing there is a little over \$100 in the kneeler account, so the project did pay for itself.

Offers to make kneelers came from outside St. John's congregation and for most people it was their first venture into tapestry work. One was made by a twelve year old boy. Some men expressed interest but then decided the women would be able to cope without them! One mother of three young children became so absorbed in her needle-work that her kneeler was completed in three weeks—record time.

When the project is finally completed there should be 50 tapestry kneelers in the Church. Kneeling is now comfortable and warm and more beauty has been added to the interior of the Church.

And the designs? There are horses, Christian symbols, acorn and oak leaves, the mountains, St. John's Church and many others.

To all involved, this centennial project has been a time of learning and sharing, and above all, a labour of love.

—Margaret Irwin

THE LYCH GATE

While the women of St. John's made kneelers to mark their celebration of the Centennial, the men have built a Lych Gate to record their appreciation of the pioneers' contribution.

The plan for the gate was drawn up by Gerald Austin of Austin and Warren Architects, as a centennial gift. The materials and labour were supplied by local residents and the work directed by Mr. Alan Hampton and ably assisted by Mr. A. J. Dixon.

The Lych Gate is planned to reproduce faithfully the pitch of the Church roof and the structure of the Church porch.

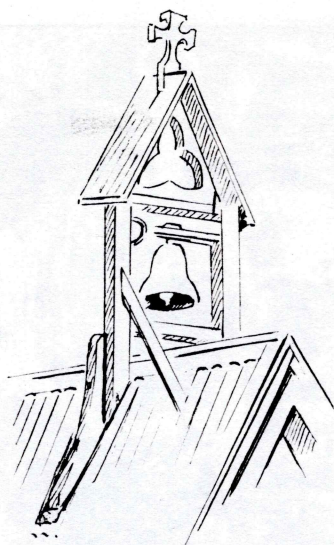


A RECENT CHURCH CONGREGATION, 1977

Back Row : Archdeacon R. Williams, Messrs. R. Williams, F. Jackson, R. M. Irwin, C. Maw, J. Hampton

Third Row : Mr. J. Stevens, Mrs. G. Low, Mr. A. Dixon, Mrs. F. Jackson, Mr. J. Irwin.

Seated : Mesdames D. McLaughlin, J. Stevens, J. Irwin, C. Butterick (Organist), A. Dixon, J. Hampton, R. Irwin, J. Ingold.



LAY READERS

Messrs. C. Mackie, W. Ward, R. Opie. P. Boag.

ORGANISTS

Mr., Mrs. and Miss Ward.

Mesdames W. Sayers, E. Collinson.

Misses B. Gadd, B. Irwin, B. Richards, E. Richards, M. Collinson, R. Gimson, H. Hooper, B. Hooper, N. Stevens, G. Clemens, N. Boag, L. Boag, M. Boag, M. Irwin.

Messrs. W. F. Irwin, O. E. Hooper, P. W. Boag.

Mesdames M. Aires, M. Butterick.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Mr. and Mrs. W. Sayers (17 years).

Misses L. Fraser, G. Bishop.

Rev. and Mrs. E. W. Blakiston taught for an hour before church twice a month for about ten years.

Mrs. Dorothy Hall 1938-1947, over difficult war years and petrol rationing.

Misses E. M. Maidens, D. Clemens, G. Richards, G. Clemens, J. Clemens, N. Boag, Denise Clemens, P. Curd, L. Maw.

Mesdames A. Dickie, D. McLaughlin, R. Irwin.

Messrs. P. Boag and B. Crozier,

FIFTH GENERATION

Hamish William, son of David and Wendy Irwin, "Aldesyde" was baptised in St. John's in 1974 and belongs to the fifth generation of both Irwin and Edgington clan associated with the Church.

Hamish wore the Maidens heirloom christening robe that has been worn by three generations and is still in perfect condition. This gown, made from Mrs. A. T. Maidens wedding frock, is complete with a petticoat of the same vintage. These fine cotton garments, embroidered and edged with lace have been sent up and down New Zealand over the years to different members of the family.

Once when there was a double christening at St. John's, Anne Crozier wore one of them, while her cousin Philip Crozier wore the other.

WEDDINGS

St. John's has always been a favourite Church for weddings—some couples travelling many miles to its peaceful picturesque setting.

The family which has held the most weddings there is probably the Maidens family, with three daughters of the second generation and seven more recently.

Many couples are married at the Church, but know little about it. Not so for Graeme Reinhardt and Jenny Shannon, who decided to hold their wedding there after photographing the Church in the starkness of winter, and the splendour of spring, summer and autumn.

"Praise we the Lord, who made all beauty,
For our senses to enjoy."

MEMORIES

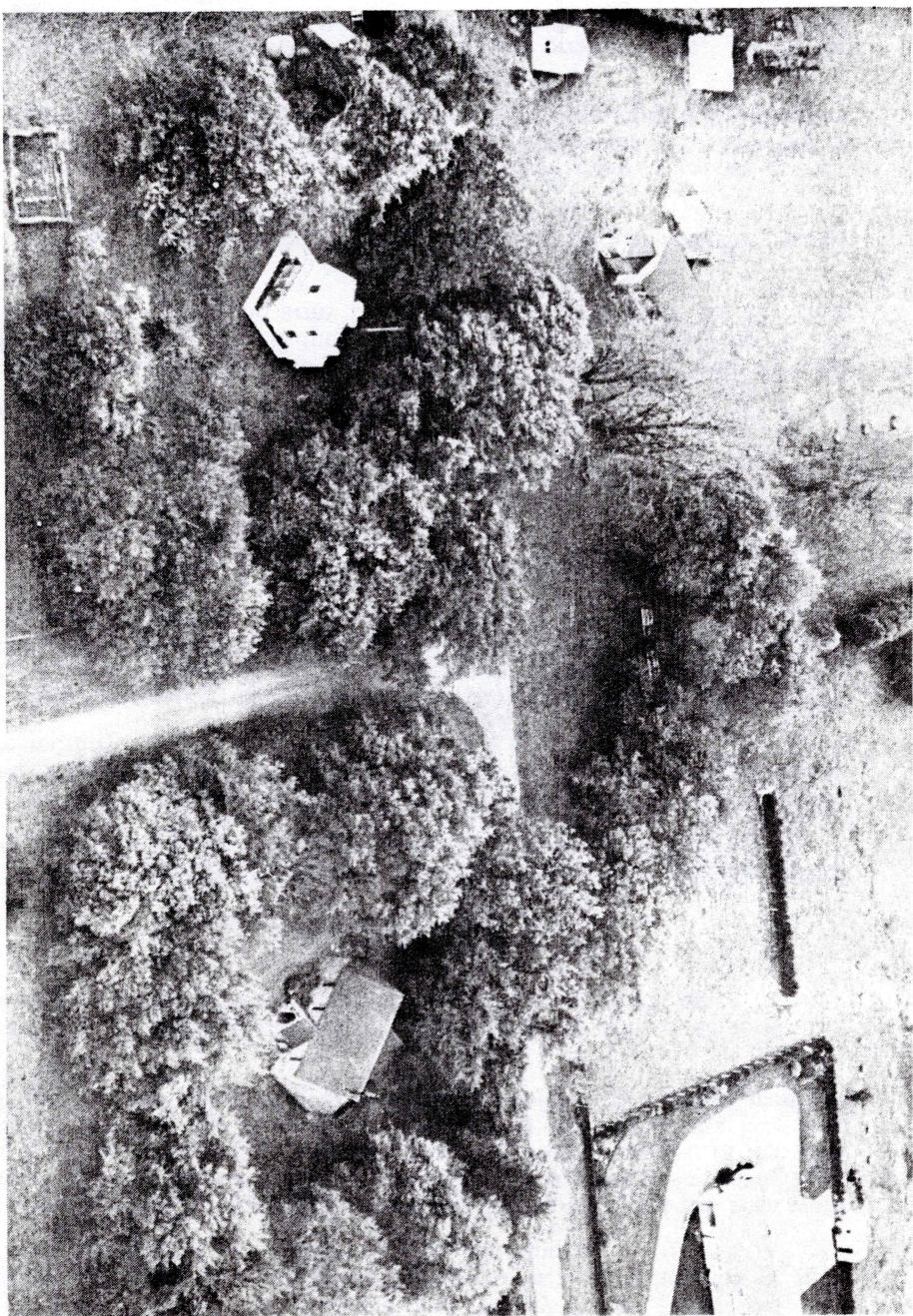
Mrs. J. D. Galpin (nee McLean)—Corwar, 1919

Dad bought Corwar from Mr. Jock Drummond in 1919, and we lived in the home built by John Cathcart Wason. It was a two storied house, but burnt down in 1928. The army blew up the remaining walls several years later.

Previously there had been a large house of about 20 rooms — single storied — but it had also burnt down.

When Mum and Dad first took over Corwar there were two graves. In those days they had fences round them. One man had been drowned in the river and the other dragged by a horse. There was also a blacksmith's shop.

Corwar was then 660 acres. Dad built the present home. Power for the house was generated from the water race and the whole lit up once the electricity was turned on.



AN AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF BARRHILL SHOWING THE THREE CIRCLES OF TREES
SYMBOLISING HOLY TRINITY

—Photo by W. R. Irwin

Mrs. E. M. E. Galletly (nee Bishop)

My mother was one of the first children to start at Barrhill school. She was Elizabeth Blakemore . . . and when she married she lived on the corner of the Market Square. I was born there on a snowy night—July 11, 1895--and lived there until I was married 51 years ago.

I can just remember Mr Wason coming down from Corwar to visit people in the little township.

My mother used to tell us how they were often short of water and all the women used to take their clothes down to the river to do their washing. They would take their children and lunch with them, drying the washing on the stones. It was easier to get down to the water's edge then.

Mrs. C. Kear (nee Collison)

Three generations of Collisons have attended Church at St. John's, Barrhill.

I remember my father saying he and his brothers and one sister attended Barrhill School in the late 1880's—the whole family would have gone to St. John's too.

I went there as a small child from 1915 to 1923. My grandfather, Alex Gordon, played the cornet, Nellie the violin and mother the piano, so we were always in demand.

I played with the Drummond children around the ruins of the first Corwar homestead when Peter Drummond owned the estate in the early 1900's.

Winnie Beattie (nee Leaman)

Born in Barrhill in 1912, I spent all my girlhood days in the village. The pace of life was slow then and people were content with their life and jobs.

Bible classes were unheard of so we were expected to attend Sunday School until the age of 17 or 18.

We lived in what was once the Barrhill pub and there was a sky light in the kitchen and a cellar in the bedroom.

Mrs. F. McIlraith was our teacher at that time (for 9 years) and Mr. A. Penney was chairman of the School committee. Mr. Penney came once a week to lead the singing classes with the aid of a tuning fork and an ink well.

My father and oldest brother supplied the music for the old time dances, sometimes playing until 4 a.m. depending on how many "shouts" were handed around. They were paid 15/-. Sunday school picnics were held frequently at the home of the A. V. Richards family.

Mrs. Ethel Hood (nee Richards)

A few reminiscences from one member of the six daughters of Albert and Emily Richards, who came from Methven to the Barrhill district in 1913.

From earliest childhood I can remember going to St. John's as part of a family. We all sat in the front left pew but as we grew bigger we extended to two pews.

The Church, where the services were held fortnightly, was very cold, but that did not deter the many regular church-going families (and a number of them drove a horse and gig) from attending Church.

Bertha was organist for a number of years and when absent, Elsie took over. Grace was an enthusiastic Sunday School teacher and Elsie embroidered and donated a set of Altar Linen to St. John's.

Memories Linger On: Ron Mauger

Perhaps it could be asked why I am so interested in Barrhill having never lived there myself.

The seed was sown when I was a child and as I listened to the experiences of my grandmother.

I have checked records at the Museum, but all that I could find out was that my Grandfather died in 1900, before my time. Now, many years later, I regret having not found out more from my Grandmother about those early days.

I can recall her saying how tough things were in England and I can just imagine their thoughts of a start in a new land. The boat trip over took several months and their baby died on the way out. As we drive along our tar sealed roads in a motor car, are we conscious of the hardship those early settlers endured? Those people have gone, but the Barrhill cemetery is a reminder of them and as I see my grandparents' tombstone with the angel on top, I wonder what sacrifice was made by my Grandmother to afford such a beautiful monument.

Life in Barrhill in those early days was pretty tough; low wages and no thought of changing one's job if one did not like it. All supplies came through Mr. Wason and it is interesting to note that the blacksmith shop is still used for storage on the property now owned by Mr. L. Ewings.

The stories of the little lodge keeper's house had always fascinated me; that is why I was so interested in having it preserved. It seemed to me to be a building which should be restored and the thought of it being used for a storshed, with an old iron roof, was right out of character. With the generous support of Mr. and Mrs. M. Curd, the building has been recently renovated.

THE PAINTING GROUP

One of the happiest memories of the Rev. Aires' ministry at Rakaia is of the painting group he started. A very able teacher, he gathered his class (or "Vicar's Harem" as he humorously called us, because try as he might he could not get any men to paint with us) and quite early, on cold frosty, but usually sunny mornings, we travelled sometimes many miles to find the right spot to paint.

Perhaps the coldest class was held at the Rakaia gorge when there was snow, frost and cloud well down on Mt. Hutt. The painting Ray Aires did that day was reproduced and worked by Mary Aires on a tapestry kneeler, which is now in St. John's.

On a warmer occasion, we decided on a view which could only be seen from the railway tracks beside Cairnbrae Station. Trains to Methven being very infrequent, we decided we could safely settle down to paint there. We had been quietly engrossed in our paintings for some time, when Hazel Mounsey remarked that she could see a light coming up the line. Amid much laughter, we hastily packed up our equipment and scrambled down the embankment. The train driver drove slowly past looking at us with amazement !!

No one was allowed to go home discouraged by a bad painting. Ray could always see a way to improve a very mediocre painting until its owner could feel much happier with her efforts.

Painting continued over several years and much progress was made until Ray and Mary left to retire to Diamond Harbour in 1973. What, we wondered would happen to our painting group now? After a short interval the Rev. Jack Eaton and his wife Barbara arrived in our parish. To our great joy we soon discovered that among Barbara's many talents and interests was a great enthusiasm for painting. A small group continued our painting outings until Jack and Barbara also left to retire in 1976.

—Christine Jackson

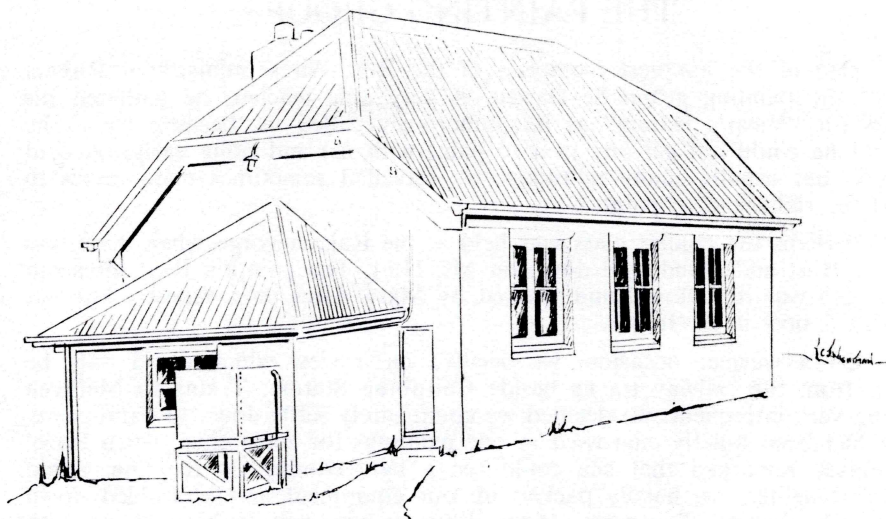
THOUGHTS OF BARRHILL

Surely J. C. Wason would be pleased
To know there is all this interest
In this small village with its trees
So carefully planned in hope to please
Those who resided in it.

Had his plan came to fruition
We would now have to face the pollution
That goes with rail and industry
Thank God this did not come to be.

For now Barrhill's a special place
Where one can come and shelter
Be it under the oaks or in St. John's
Take care it does not alter.

—Jan Hampton



BARRHILL SCHOOL

FIRST DAY PUPILS, 1878

Annie Radford
Thomas Radford
Charlotte Lobb

Hypolite Iowen
Florence Babbage
Mary I. Babbage

John Ross
Eliza Simmons

BELOW STANDARD I

Mary S. Iowen
Alice Hurst
Mary Hurst
Thomas Lowe
Fred Babbage

Mary Lowe
Mary King
William Hurst
Jane King
Eliza Blackmore

Kate Lobb
Flora Simmons
Reg. Babbage
Fred. Simmons
May Iowen

BARRHILL SCHOOL

Inspected November 13, 1878

Remarks of Inspector — Teacher Mr. Walke.

This school has been open only five months and most of the children had not attended school before. When these facts are taken into consideration the progress shown must be deemed satisfactory.

The regularity is moderately good, but some of the pupils are unpunctual.

The registers and other school records are neatly and accurately kept.

The discipline and order are satisfactory and the methods of instruction fairly intelligent.

The building is spacious, well ventilated, and in every way suitable.

The blackboards recently obtained are of very poor quality.

W. L. EDGE, Inspector.

14/11/78



BARRHILL SCHOOL, 1912

Front Row : George Farquhar, Clyne Hurst, Nixon, Arthur Farquhar, Unknown, Rose Leaman, ——— Leaman, Betty Hurst, Annie Penney

Standing : Bob Penney, Clinton, George Bishop, Ada Brimicombe, Ethel Leaman, Ina Gadd, Kate Penney, May Bishop, Bill Clinton, Molly Farquhar, Alice Farquhar, Blanche Nixon.

Back Row : Jimmy O'Connell, Dave Boyd, Ronald Opie (Teacher).

BARRHILL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Extracts from minutes

1877—July 9: (same day as the opening of St. John's Church). Moved by Mr. McMillan and seconded by Mr. S. Hurst and carried—That Mr. C. S. Mackie be appointed Chairman.

The question of the site for the School was discussed and an offer received from Mr. J. C. Wason of a free grant of two acres in the Barrhill township as a site. Mr. Wason's offer was accepted subject to the approval of the Board of Education.

Moved by Mr. Babbage and seconded by Mr. W. McMillan that: The chairman of the Education Board of the district of Canterbury be requested to prepare specifications and call for tenders for the erection of a school and schoolhouse.

October 31: The plans were approved and accepted and the tender of £770 for both the school and schoolhouse went to Mr. Sinclair.

December: The chairman was authorised to employ a team to convey the school furniture from the railway station to Barrhill for safe storage until the school opened. Mr. John Grigg was nominated for a seat on the Board of Education.

1878—June 7: The school opened with 23 pupils.

1882—The chairman was requested to give the parents and guardians of children aged five to thirteen, within the school district, notice that "unless they send their children regularly to school after it is opened for teaching, the police would be instructed to bring them to justice."

1884-1885—Wason served as chairman of school committee.

1893—Wason resigned from school committee.

1895—The chairman was requested to ask Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Wason if they would take part in a concert.

1901 September 4: Committee present Messrs. J. Bishop, G. Brimacombe, J. Connell.

Hoisting the Flag—Committee to provide afternoon tea—dance to follow in the evening—Mrs. W. Sayers to get toys to distribute among children. Chairman to write to Mr. and Mrs. A. McIlraith and asking Miss McIlraith to hoist the flag.

1910—April 4: A meeting of Committee members. Present Messrs. J. Bishop, J. Brick, J. Connell, J. Clinton. Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed. It was decided to put the Governor General's visit to the school on record.

His Excellency the Governor visited the Barrhill School on March 23, 1910 and addressed the school children.

Confirmed April 25, 1910.
J. Bishop, Chairman.

1912—April 17: Meeting of Committee. Members present, Messrs. G. Hurst, J. Connell, G. Brimcombe, W. Hurst, E. Collison and S. Leaman. Mr. R. Opie was elected teacher for the Barrhill school. It was arranged by the committee to give Mr. and Mrs. W. Sayers a presentation on Friday evening, May 3. Mrs. Sayers was to be presented with a bible and the balance given to Mrs. and Mr. Sayers as a purse of sovereigns.

1919—August 11: Influenza epidemic and the "signing of the Armistice". The peace function held in the school grounds was attended by 300 people and was a great success.

1920—A new floor in the school was put in by a Timaru architect.

1924—May 12: Committee members present: Messrs. C. A. Champion (Chairman), P. McCabe, A. Holmes, H. Dixon, and E. Collison. A donation of £2 towards the piano fund was received from Sir Heaton Rhodes, M.P. An application was granted to the Rakaia Methodist minister for use of the school once a month for services on the same terms as the Rokeby school.

1924—School picnic and prize giving. In the evening the school was packed to witness the turning on of the electric light by Mrs. J. Bishop, the oldest resident, and hear the new piano (£75). Speeches were made by Messrs. C. A. Champion, J. Bishop and M. McNamara of Rakaia. After supper came dancing to McDonald's Band, Rakaia.

1928—The committee unanimously agreed to allow Miss Fraser (the teacher) a short time each week before school to take religious classes.

1931—Electric light was put into the teacher's residence. Euchre tournaments continued fortnightly.

Joined in with the annual Friendly Societies (Rakaia) picnic excursion to New Brighton by train and tram.

1938—March: The school was closed and consolidated with Lauriston seven miles away.

AN AMAZING FEAT

The Barrhill school building of concrete structure with walls 12 inches thick, like the Church and Schoolhouse, measures 27 feet by 20 feet and has a porch attached. It has a large fireplace in the centre of the east wall and when the fire is going, the heat circulates in pipes behind the lining of the walls. Vents are set at intervals to distribute the heat.

An amazing construction feat for 1877.

LIST OF CHAIRMEN

C. S. Mackie	6 years	A. Penney	3 years
W. McMillan	3 years	J. A. Collison	3 years
W. G. Sandys		J. Fantham	
J. C. Wason		C. A. Campion	2 years
J. Spooner	7 years	J. Bishop	
J. Blain		E. G. Hayward	2 years
P. Bishop	17 years	A. Holmes	7 years
A. Boyd	5 years	J. S. Hughes	1 year

TEACHERS 1778-1938

Thomas Walke	1778-1779	Mrs. F. A. McIlraith	1914-1922
Geo. Sylvester	1880-1882	Miss. L. Frazer	1924-1927
Ernest H. Clark	1886-1888	Mrs. B. Robinson	1928-1929
W. Ward	1891-1894	Miss. M. T. Lonie	1930-1932
Mrs. Sayers	1895-1911	Mr. S. Drew	1934-1937
R. Opie	1912-1914		

Roll in 1878 was 23 pupils

1890 was 27 pupils

1910 was 35 pupils

1920 was 21 pupils

1930 was 25 pupils

BARRHILL POST OFFICE

The first Post Office at Barrhill opened in 1876 with Mr. H. Sparrow as postmaster, followed by Geo. Edgington in 1877, Geo. Silvester, whose salary, was £6 per annum, took over in 1880. Geo. Edgington was reappointed in 1883, W. Dickie in 1884 and T. H. Mills in 1885. Mills conveyed mail by horseback for £50 per annum. James Bishop became postmaster in 1895 and mail was reduced to thrice weekly.

Mrs. Eliz. Hurst was postmistress from 1901 until 1924. The post office was known as the general meeting place of the villagers who came to watch the sorting and collect their mail and papers.

From 1924 until 1937 a member of the Hurst family carried on in charge of the telephone office which received and sent telegrams from 1906. A telephone bureau for use in toll calls was added in 1908. In 1976, automatic telephones brought the district into the Ashburton free-calling area.

Jack Irwin can remember that until 1925 mail was delivered daily from Rakaia by horse and gig, driven by Jack Cronin. On his journey along the River Road he delivered private mail bags to about 30 householders, hanging them on a cabbage tree or willow tree or just leaving them on gates. These water-proofed canvas bags were locked and had to be emptied of mail and papers in readiness for picking up on his return journey with outgoing mail at 3.00 p.m.

Barrhill Post Office closed on February 7, 1925, with the beginning of the rural delivery service.

On January 17, 1925 authority was given for the establishment of a new rural delivery from Rakaia to serve Highbank, Mt. Hutt and Barrhill. The tender by Mr. A. A. Oliver for £375 per annum was accepted. Known at first as the Mt. Hutt Rural Mail Delivery, it has continued until this day leaving Rakaia at 8.30 a.m. and returning (now) by 2.45 p.m., covering 160 miles and serving 203 householders.

The delivery was renamed No. 2 R.D. but because the last box holders on the run complained about getting the "morning paper" at 4.00 p.m., a sub-rural delivery, No. 4 R.D. was added. The No. 4 R.D. covers 51 miles for 46 box holders.

THE BARRHILL LIBRARY

The library was founded by Mr. Ronald Opie in 1913. The inaugural meeting was held on November 1, 1913, in the Barrhill School—Committee Messrs. A. Penney (chairman), C. Gadd, P. Collison, R. Opie (librarian), Mrs. W. Hurst.

The Country Library van called three times a year to the library (a hut 10 feet by 8 feet), kindly lent by Mr. O. E. Hooper. It was sited on a section along a paper road between the farms of Noel McLaughlin and R. E. Cairns. It was the only library for miles around and registrations show that members came from as far away as Lauriston.

Socials were held in the Barrhill School to augment funds to buy new books. In 1937 the new library was built in the village. Mrs. J. Clinton was librarian for many years.

On March 1, 1960, Mr. E. H. Gibbs, the librarian, reported that the number of members had dwindled and the library would have to close. The building and contents, including £6.40 in hand, were handed over to the Barrhill Hall Society.

BARRHILL TENNIS CLUB

Extracts from Minutes

The Barrhill Tennis Club was formed in 1929. At the inaugural meeting were, Messrs. A. Holmes (President), V. Fairey, T. Maw, G. Gemmell, R. Gemmell, Chas. Clemens, C. A. Campion, Stephens, Dickson, Bishop, Hayward, Doak, Reid, McNicol, Bishop, Gemmell Snr., Farquhar, Hooper, Mesdames Campion, Fairey, Tizzard, Toon, Holmes, Bishop, Leaman, Miss Robertson (Secretary), and Miss Gemmell.

19 October. Opening Day—large crowd. Mrs. Holmes and Mrs. Campion hit the first balls on a chipped court sited on the school grounds. Play was permitted on Sundays outside Church hours.

1932. It was agreed that the court be reclayed and oiled with waste-oil and marked with hoop iron.

1935. The President Mr. P. Clinton reported that the school court was not available and that Mr. Cone was willing to sell the Club section eight (Sycamore Ave. and River Rd. corner) for £18.

1936. November 30. The President, Mr. F. Mahoney reported that one bag of salt had been spread on this new court, but it had not had the desired effect. The Secretary (Mr. A. Leadley) was instructed to obtain 10 lbs of Sodium Chloride to spray on the chipped court.

1937. September 23. Final meeting. President C. Cone, Vice-President J. Marshall, C. McLachlan, A. Holmes, O. E. Hooper, V. Fairey, E. G. Hayward, H. Dixon, R. Cairns, Sec A. Leadley, assistant Secretary S. Drew. Committee: T. Hurst, V. Blackburn, A. Maw, G. Maw, Misses B. Tizzard, J. Hayward, R. Drew, J. Holmes, M. Fairey and Mrs. Hall. Subscriptions still 2/6 a member—34 financial members.

The minutes end there!



SCHOOL HOUSE

BARRHILL HALL

For 12 years the residents of Barrhill debated over what should be done with the school building. Some householders even tried to re-open the school for education. During these 12 years a social committee arranged functions for people leaving the district.

In 1958 a Hall Committee was formed with Mr. C. C. A. McLachlan as Chairman; others present were Messrs. D. Campion, G. Maw, J. Clinton, A. Dixon, F. Clemens.

In 1971 the hall was vested with the Ashburton County Council from the Lands and Survey Department. Old pine trees were bulldozed out.

1973—16/4/73: Concrete block toilets were built by local residents. Messrs A. Hampton (supervisor), E. Hooper, J. Irwin, J. Stevens, D. Campion, and G. Maw.

1976—The schoolhouse was vested with the Ashburton County Council from the Lands and Survey Department and the local Hall Committee agreed to administer both the hall and school house.

ENTERTAINMENT

Socials were held in the school—including fortnightly Euchre tournaments after its opening in 1877. While the Card Evenings at Lauriston and Rokeby faded out a few years before, Barrhill was able to carry on successfully until the school closed in 1938.

Billy tea was a feature at supper time with the water being boiled in the copper at the school house.

Mrs. G. Maw remembers a Social Club being formed about 1939, and says that socials were held fortnightly—cards and dances to raise funds for the Red Cross and for sending parcels to soldiers overseas. This Committee arranged farewells and welcome home socials for local soldiers as well.

BARRHILL CHRISTMAS PARTY

A Christmas Party was held in 1950 and for several years afterwards for the children of the district. Starting off with a few it gradually grew until over 30 attended. The arrival of Father Christmas was the highlight of the function.

BARRHILL VILLAGE

About eight homes remained in the village when the school closed in 1938 and the school grounds became overgrown with gorse and broom. The number of residents gradually dwindled away and the village slipped backwards, giving it an uncared-for look.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Clinton came to live in the Barrhill school house in 1948 and as there were weeds and growth waist high, they grazed a cow around the house.

In 1974, when they left Barrhill to live in Ashburton, their flower garden made a beautiful picture—especially the huge circle of daffodils in the springtime. The amount of fruit and vegetables they took off that section was staggering. The daffodils dotted around the market square, were planted there by Mrs. Clinton—the violets by Mrs. Bryne.

Mrs. Clinton can remember in 1948 a woman filling buckets with water, for household use, from the Barrhill school tank and wheeling them home on an axle with two wheels. Mrs. Clinton maintains that even though she has hot water on tap in Ashburton today, she still prefers the copper boiled rain water carried in buckets for baths and washing from their unattached washhouse at Barrhill.

Mrs. W. Hurst lived in Barrhill all her life (beside the still flourishing mulberry tree) and was librarian of the Barrhill Public Library for several years until shifting to Methven in 1962. Ray Hurst, her son, left the village in 1967, being the final member of the pioneer Hurst family to leave Barrhill.

In 1969, Mr. and Mrs. Derek Byrne of Christchurch, leased a section which had been set aside for a vicarage when the Barrhill village was developed. They built an old world holiday cottage, which adds charm to the Square. Their historical interest for retaining Wason's ideals led them to replant poplar, birch and lime trees on each avenue, so named.

Sheep now graze and thrive in the shelter of numerous old fruit trees, natives and oaks—all a living memorial to John Cathcart Wason.

WHAT MAKES THE VILLAGE TICK NOW?

The Rakaia River brings fishermen and duck shooters into the village. They scramble down the 150 feet steep bank to try their luck for salmon or duck.

One can hear jet boats cruising up and down the river now, and occasionally see single canoeists paddling downstream from the gorge.

Bus loads of students and tourists visit the Church and village and some continue on to inspect Mr. O. E. Hooper's trotting establishment at Balrazie.

In 1976 a horse and carriage rally and a car rally in 1977 brought visitors to the village for picnics and parties.

Until about 1966 the lanes around the village were mostly grass tracks but now the main entrance to the Square is tar sealed. The parishioners decided at a meeting several years ago to write to the Ashburton County Council requesting this be done. In 1975 tarsealing was completed as far as the Church and Hall.

The Methven Lions kindly erected three tables and chairs so picnickers could dine under the oaks.

Future Hopes!

That the electric power lines going through the oak trees in Market Square will be buried under-ground before long.

THE BIG WIND

August 1, 1975 is a date which will be remembered by Canterbury people for the rest of their lives. Early that morning, a nor'-west gale of terrible magnitude and destructive force left in its path a scene unparalleled in the province's history.

Hundreds of acres of trees upturned, wooden power poles snapped and metal poles bent at weird angles, inches of top soil blown for miles, mangled grain silos tossed mile after mile over fences and hedges, roofs and

buildings torn apart; all a savage memorial to this wind, this proof of nature's might. Barrhill was hit too and the above scenes will remain ingrained in local minds for years.

Most people have their own stories of their own predicament on the night of August 1st and this was ours at Corwar:

Having lit a large heap of recently bulldozed willow trees on the afternoon of July 31, we retired to the house after finalising work. We had a 75 metre fire break between the burning trees and the neighbour's plantation, downwind. What a shock therefore when a passing motorist alerted us to a fire in the pine trees! With the wind having steadily built up in the early evening, sparks had drifted deep into the plantation and lit the mat of pine needles. The Lauriston Fire Brigade arrived, and with the help of locals the fires were doused and the willow heap saturated. At this stage we realised that this was no ordinary nor'-wester but a wind of immense power which was still building up.

Not being able to sleep because of the wild shrieking and howling of the wind and the sound of roofing iron banging, I went outside to check the fire at about 1.00 a.m. An orange glow was radiating far above the pine trees. Neighbours were quickly on hand and, with buckets of water, we raced into the plantation to douse the new patches of fire in the pine needles.

The wind by this stage was berserk; branches were falling and buckets ripped out of our hands. When the huge pine trees started being uprooted and smashing around us we decided discretion was the better part of valour and gave up the fight. The fire brigades could not reach the scene because of poplar trees lying smashed to pieces all over the road between Barrhill and Corwar. Even access through the paddocks was cut off.

Crescendo time approached about 3.00 a.m. and by this time the wind was doing the work for us by blowing the fire straight through the plantation and not allowing it to build up too badly and spread along. By 5.00 a.m. the back of the wind was broken, and by 7.00 a.m. the eagerly awaited sou'-westerly and the Methven Fire Brigade had arrived. Within no time the fire was out and surprisingly little damage had resulted.

One sobering and somewhat chilling aspect of the night's activities was only discovered as daylight came. The fowl house in the yard had lost its roof and pieces of corrugated iron from it had been wrapped around trees at about head height, right where we had been rushing around trying to put the fire out and surprisingly little damage had resulted.

What an absolute mess the countryside looked over the following weeks, with lambing right on hand. Uprooted trees had either smashed down fences or lifted them high in the air on their roots. Many of the beautiful old trees John Cathcart Wason had planted nearly 100 years ago were flattened—a great shame as so many of these were his true memorial. Buildings had new roofs or chimneys, and fences were rebuilt within weeks, but unfortunately the trees will take decades to replace.

As I think back and remember the storm of August 1, 1975, the main lesson I have learnt is that no matter how advanced man becomes technologically, he will never truly master the forces of nature.

—G. D. Champion

NOTABLE PARISHIONERS

1874-1877

John Cathcart Wason, Chairman of the Rakaia Road Board.

1876-1879

J. C. Wason, Member of the Ashburton County Council.

1890

J. C. Wason became Member of Parliament for Selwyn.

1904

William James Dickie, Member of the Mt. Hutt Road Board.

1905-1914

W. J. Dickie, Member of the Ashburton County Council.

1914-1917

W. J. Dickie became Member of Parliament for Selwyn.

1910-1921

W. J. Dickie, member of the Ashburton Hospital Board

1938-39

John C. Irwin, Member of the Rakaia Road Board.

1925-1944

H. J. Crothers, Member of the Ashburton County Council.

1938-1940

H. J. Crothers, Chairman of the Ashburton County Council.

1966 to Date

C. C. A. McLachlan became Member of Parliament for Selwyn now changed to Rakaia.

1975

C. C. A. McLachlan became the Hon. C. C. A. McLachlan, Minister of Railways and Transport.

1952-1954

Mrs. J. Mounsey, President of the Mid-Canterbury Country Women's Institute.

1965 to Date

John Irwin elected to represent the Mt. Hutt Riding on the Ashburton County Council.

1967

John Irwin became a Justice of the Peace.

1974-76

Mrs. G. Low, Treasurer of the Mid-Canterbury Country Women's Institute.

1976 to Date

Mrs. A. Dickie, President of the Mid-Canterbury Country Women's Institute. (Mrs. Dickie's husband is a son of the W. J. Dickie mentioned above).

In Memory of the men of this Parish
who gave their lives in war

1914-1918

G. GADD
P. S. COLLISON

O. WILKIE
T. CLINTON

1939-1945

I. KENNEDY
E. W. McLACHLAN

W. G. STEPHENS
W. F. IRWIN

"WE WILL REMEMBER THEM"

In this Centennial year we salute and honour
their sacrifice



ST. JOHN'S



CORWAR LODGE

The desire to preserve the Corwar Gatekeepers Lodge for posterity resulted in the formation of the Barrhill Corwar Lodge Preservation Society on February 8, 1972.

After 100 years the concrete of Corwar Lodge is still in perfect order. The walls, dividing each of the four rooms and the floor are built of concrete, with the fireplace built across the corner of the kitchen. The heat, at times intense, penetrates through the walls into the other three rooms, thus, as Mrs. Opie recalls "bed and furniture had to be kept away from the walls nearest the fireplace".

The lodge measures about 22 feet by 22 feet. Originally the roof was of slate, then iron and now tiles, as the renovations take place.

A fence constructed of old galvanised posts imported from Birmingham and now redundant, early iron standards and wire collected from various local farms, surrounds the cottage in a small section surveyed off from Corwar and now vested in the County Council.

It is hoped this project will be a place of interest for future visitors, as Barrhill village has been for many years.

The Committee today is: Patron, Mr. D. N. Campion (present owner of Corwar); Mr. C. C. McLachlan (past owner), President, Mr. A. Dixon; Secretary/Treasurer, Mrs. Jan Hampton; Committee, Mesdames A. Dixon, C. Clemens, G. Cairns, P. Wright, C. Wightman, Miss J. Wightman, Mr. and Mrs. R. Mauger, Mr. and Mrs. M. Curd, Mr. and Mrs. J. Irwin, Mr. and Mrs. A. Hampton and Mr. and Mrs. J. Stevens.

CORWAR

18 January, 1877: John Cathcart Wason bought rural sections Nos. 26602 and 26603. These were freehold but he leased more to make up the station he named Corwar.

11 April: The certificate of title was transferred to Peter Drummond. Some land was taken up by John Wilson Drummond and later sold to Richard George McLean on 30 February, 1924.

17 September 1929: John Herbert Doak and Alan Doak bought Corwar.

16 February 1934: It was repossessed by Richard George McLean.

23 September 1936: Corwar was sold to Thomas Campbell and Ada Sarah McLachlan.

11 December 1951: It was taken over by Colin Campbell Alexander McLachlan.

1974: Corwar was sold once again—to David N. Campion.

A FUTURE FOR ANTIQUES

My life-time dream is, to have my own Museum where I will have on display machinery and equipment used by the farmers years ago.

I have gathered together oil engines which I will restore to the original condition. I have already restored a Cooper Little Wonder shearing plant. Also with help I have rebuilt a buckboard and have a dray and a gig to rebuild. By going to clearing sales, and with gifts from friends, I also have harness and various other items.

I am a member of the Ashburton Railway and Preservation Society at Tinwald.

In some small way, I would like to bring to future generations, an idea of what life was like in the past.

—Alistair Stevens

BARRHILL VILLAGE

High above the river
A landmark with its trees,
Oak Lane, Sycamore Lane,
And more than these.
Nestled in its heart,
The Parish Church, St. John's,
A school, once filled with children,
Now, alas, all gone.
Quiet though its byways,
It still stands serene,
Hallowed spot, treasured dell,
Cathcart Wason's dream.

—L. Cairns

IN CHARGE OF THE PARISH

CURATES

Rev. Henry Collins	1877	Rev. W. H. Elton	1879
Rev. E. E. Chambers	1881	Rev. H. Collins	1887
Rev. John Holland	1891		

VICARS

Rev. J. Holland	1891	Rev. H. H. Mathias	1900
Rev. G. W. Russell	1903	Rev. H. H. Mathias	1904
Rev. H. Nelson Wright	1913	Rev. E. N. Blakiston	1916
Rev. J. C. Hawsworth	1926	Rev. A. H. Barnett	1930
Rev. H. J. W. Knights	1935	Rev. W. C. Wisdom	1939
Rev. B. C. Holden	1942	Rev. B. K. Bond	1946
Rev. E. E. Atkinson	1950	Canon S. Parr	1953
Rev. F. Wright	1960	Rev. G. Mountford	1963
Rev. K. Robinson	1969	Rev. R. Aires	1969
Archdeacon S. Woods	1973	Rev. J. Eaton	1973
(3 months)		Rev. Paul Bathurst	1979
Archdeacon R. O. Williams	1976	Rev. John P. Roe	1983
(present)			

VESTRY, 1887-1977

Messrs. C. Alington, J. Spooner, J. Irwin, S. Hurst, E. Clark, J. Whilton, F. Mills, C. Maxwell, D. Hurst, W. Ward, W. Chapman, J. C. Wason, Hall, Crosbie, Radford, A. Lowe, J. Hurst, W. Hurst, Geo. Edgington, E. Collison, Pritchard, A. McLraith, Wm. Irwin, C. Smidt, G. Hartnell, E. Brimicombe, J. Bishop, A. V. Richards, J. C. Irwin, W. Gimson, J. Gibson, C. Goodwin, P. Clinton, R. Maidens, T. Stapleton, John Irwin, H. Crothers, A. Maidens, Misses A. Irwin, H. Irwin, G. Richards, D. Maidens, E. Maidens, E. Richards, Mesdames J. Hall, W. Gimson, V. Fairey, A. Maidens, O. E. Hopper, H. Dixon, J. McIntosh, V. Boag. Messrs. M. Curd, H. Dixon, F. Amos, H. Stevens, F. Clemens, R. M. Irwin, J. Dixon, V. Boag, O. E. Hooper, A. Dixon, A. Stephens, L. Reesby, J. Mounsey, P. Boag, B. Crozier, F. Jackson, V. Rivers, A. Hampton, A. Dickie, D. McLaughlin, M. Wright, E. Perkinson, C. Maw, J. Ingold, D. W. Irwin, J. Stevens and J. Hampton.

Mesdames J. Mounsey, H. Stevens, M. Curd, A. Stephens, A. Dickie, D. McLaughlin, F. Clemens, R. Maidens, G. Low, P. Boag, F. Jackson, A. Dixon, R. Irwin, B. Crozier, A. Hampton, J. Ingold, J. Stevens, J. Hampton and Miss Gilpin.

PROGRAMME

LAURISTON HALL

Friday, 8th July, 1977

6.30 p.m. Social Hour

7.30 p.m. Buffet Meal

9.00 p.m. Centennial Ball

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

Sunday, 10th July, 1977

10.30 a.m. Eucharist and Thanksgiving Service and Dedication of
Tapestry Kneelers and Lych Gate

1.00 p.m. Luncheon in the Barrhill School

Cutting of cake and speeches

Display of old photographs

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr. John Irwin

Secretary: Mrs. D. McLaughlin

Treasurer: Mrs. A. Hampton

Ball Convener: Mr. A. Hampton

Information Officer: Mrs. J. Irwin

Luncheon Organiser : Mesdames G. Low and L. Clemens

Committee: Mesdames A. Dixon, J. Hampton, Messrs. A. Dixon, F. Jackson,
R. M. Irwin, J. Stevens and J. Hampton.

Present Churchwardens are : Messrs. A. J. Dixon and F. S. Jackson

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